



TASK FORCE LIBERTY ***Press Release***

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FORWARD OPERATING BASE DANGER, TIKRIT, Iraq – In Iraq's growing heat, Task Force Liberty Soldiers continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with Iraqi Security Forces in the fight against the insurgency - arresting terrorist suspects, uncovering weapons caches and finding IEDs. These combat operations go on in tandem with ISF training and civil military operations.

Training results can be seen in the increasing autonomy of ISF units now taking the lead more and more in security operations. Iraqi police responded to an improvised explosive device attack in Kirkuk May 26, securing the area after terrorists targeted a Task Force Liberty combat patrol. No Coalition Forces were wounded, but three civilians were, and the police evacuated them to Kirkuk General Hospital for treatment.

Iraqi police in Owja conducted a large-scale operation on May 24 to find and detain fugitives and weapon caches. The operation focused on farmlands south of Tikrit and Owja, and involved 1,000 police officers. The raid is the first of its kind in the region.

Iraqi army soldiers in Kirkuk Province conducted Operation Joint Tenacity May 24, taking the lead to search the villages around Riyadh for terrorist cells. The Iraqi air force provided aerial surveillance during the mission. Iraqi Explosive Ordnance Detachment (IEOD) personnel disarmed an IED on May 20 in Mamdoda. Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 116th Armor Regiment reported the explosive to Aruba Police, who notified IEOD.

Iraqi army soldiers completed a two-phase operation to rid the Muqdadiyah area of terrorist cells. The operation, called Summer Heat, captured a cell leader following a meeting to discuss buying weapons. The Iraqi army used the intelligence provided by the leader to detain 14 other cell members and assorted weapons and equipment.

Iraqi citizens and their families continue to suffer the brunt of the violence. A two-year old girl died in a terrorist car bombing on June 2 in Kirkuk. The suicide bomber



targeted a supply convoy. Arapha Police said the attack injured 13 Iraqi citizens, who received treatment at Kirkuk General Hospital. Iraqi police and soldiers provided security at the scene. A rocket attack killed a mother and child on May 23 as they sat in their home in the area of Mamdoda. The attack injured three others.

Against this background, the voice of the Iraqi people resounds with the drive for Iraqi governance. Citizens of Jalula held a peaceful rally on May 8 against terrorism. The rally brought together Arab, Kurd and Turkomen residents to speak out against the terrorists who are injuring and killing Iraqis. The rally came three days after an IED attack killed two teenage boys and injured their father.

The Kirkuk Provincial Governor held a press conference on May 24 and denounced Zarqawi and his brand of terrorism. Governor Abdul Rahman Mustafa spoke after the Provincial Council Meeting, saying that the Islam Zarqawi preaches does not exist because it is not right to murder innocent people, referencing a rocket attack in a residential area that killed two and injured others. Mustafa said he understands that terrorists are trying to divide Iraq along ethnic and cultural lines, but is confident Iraqis will work out any differences.

The Kirkuk Provincial Council railed the assassins who killed two former leaders recently. Members who spoke during the weekly meeting on May 31, said the murderous acts would not prevent the spread of democracy and freedom in the province. The council members told the people of Kirkuk that they hold the key to stopping the insurgency.

Breaking the Cycle of Violence

In the last two weeks, operations in the Task Force Liberty area of operations have resulted in an estimated 35 anti-Iraqi forces killed, 6 wounded, and an additional 444 detained. Significant ammunition seized included more than 2,361 rocket, mortar, artillery and tank rounds, 237 small arms and grenades, 2,760 rounds of small arms ammunition, 635 mines, 21 rocket propelled grenade launchers, and 127 rocket propelled grenade rounds. Major equipment found included 7 anti-aircraft guns, 2,619 anti-aircraft rounds, 168 armor-piercing rounds, 648 assorted fuses, 75 pounds of



explosives, 1,106 pounds of assorted propellants, 11 illumination rounds, and an SA-7 anti-aircraft missile. Task Force Liberty operations and Iraqi Security Forces seized \$11,600 and 381,500,000 Iraqi Dinar. Within the division's area of responsibility, 64 improvised explosive devices were discovered prior to detonation, preventing the needless loss of life at the hands of anti-Iraqi forces.

Iraqi army begins real transition to control of security missions

The growing capabilities of the Iraqi army and police forces in North Central Iraq allowed Task Force Liberty Soldiers to reduce their physical presence in areas in Kirkuk and As Sulayminayah Province May 31 and June 1.

With a nod toward the brutality of the past and the future of a democratic Iraq, Iraqi soldiers, citizens and civic leaders celebrated two watershed events - the transfer of Dlbis Camp to Iraqi army control and the activation of the 3rd Brigade of the 4th Iraqi Army Division.

"We all know that the dictator, Saddam Hussein used the Iraqi army as a tool to oppress and destroy the Kurdish, Arab, Turkmen, Kildanian, and Assyrian rebels," said Maj. Gen. Dolani Anwar, the Iraqi 3rd Brigade Commander during the ceremony. "But Operation Iraqi Freedom gave a chance, and created a circumstance in which the Iraqi army re-organized itself in a new form. The army stepped onto a new stage with better quality and quantity forces with the cooperation of the Coalition Forces."

With the activation, 3rd Brigade is now the lead military security element in all of As Sulaymaniyah Province. The ceremony marks the first transition to full provincial control.

The events in Dlbis and Sulayminayah follow the closure of two other Task Force Liberty operating bases in Kirkuk Province. As more Iraqi forces develop their own independent and sustainable operations, more transfers of authority and base closures will follow.

1st Brigade Combat Team (Raider). The commander of the Raider Brigade Combat Team recently met with local tribal leaders in order to reinforce the future prospects of local government and security in Salah Ad Din Province. Col. Mark E. McKnight met



with 30 local sheiks loyal to the former regime on May 25 in an effort to open communications about the future of the province.

Many of the sheiks attending were meeting Task Force Liberty representatives for the first time. The sheiks had a vigorous, spirited discussion that started out very pointed. They were grateful that the commander of the 1st Brigade Combat Team would listen to their concerns, expressing a previous sense of hopelessness and frustration. These leaders were among those who had lost the most with the fall of Hussein's regime. Gen. Eissa of the Salah Ad Din Provincial Joint Coordination Center and Sheik Kanaan of the Al Shamar tribe mediated the talks, at one point stepping in to focus talks on looking forward instead of hashing out old issues. McKnight closed the meeting with his challenge for the sheiks to take a lead in stopping the violence.

Community leaders in Bayji and leaders of the 1st Battalion, 103rd Armor task force came together in late May to resolve the issue of insurgent violence. The 1st Battalion, 103rd Armor Soldiers participated in the first Bayji Sheiks Security Conference May 24. Attended by all the tribal sheiks, elders and influential Imams in Bayji, the group discussed taking responsibility for security in their various neighborhoods. At the end of the meeting, the assembled leaders agreed to take pro-active measures to secure their neighborhoods and take their issues with the Bayji Police to the Provincial Police office in Tikrit.

Iraqi army and 1st BCT Soldiers continue to work together to root out insurgent activity in Salah Ad Din Province. The Iraqi 4th Division, 1st Brigade's 1st Battalion, during a joint raid of a suspected IED maker's home, discovered a wired 155mm white phosphorous round, three 57mm rockets, and a bag of RPK ammunition in an open crypt at the Bayji cemetery May 22. The 1st Battalion had been conducting a sweep of the cemetery based on their intelligence that IED/VBIED makers were storing weapons in that location. During the sweep, an Iraqi soldier noticed an open, unmarked crypt and found the 155mm round and bag of ammunition.

The 4th Iraqi Army Battalion, combined with 1st BCT Soldiers from the Wisconsin Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry conducted joint patrols near Al Fadruz May 13. The patrols were designed to find and stop insurgent activity, detect



possible IEDs, maintain a safe environment for civilians, and promote confidence in Iraqi Security Forces.

Iraqi police demonstrated their organization and attention to detail during an unannounced inspection by an Iraqi Police Liaison Officer (IPLO) May 27 in Tikrit. The 2nd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment IPLO representative described the Iraqi police development as “continual improvement, unimpeded by terrorist attacks.”

3rd Brigade Combat Team (Sledgehammer). Soldiers of the “Sledgehammer” Brigade Combat Team from Fort Benning, Georgia continue their work to bring peace and stability to Diyala Province.

Diyala Police and the 2nd Iraqi Army Brigade of the 5th Division participated in a memorial celebration May 22 for Maj. Imad Shaker, who died in an attack against Diyala Governor Ra’ad a week earlier. The Iraqi police and soldiers, in conjunction with the governor and Provincial Council, planned, coordinated and executed the tribute. Iraqi soldiers established the outer cordon and conducted patrols as Iraqi police established the inner cordon, providing a safe, secure environment for the participants.

Task Force 2-69 Armor, the Iraqi 5th Division, 3rd Brigade’s 1st Iraqi Army Battalion, Iraqi police and local leaders in Sindiyah conducted an opening ceremony May 25 of the Jayzani Pump Station. The construction of the pump station supplies water to 8,000 people in throughout the Hibhib Nahia. The ceremony promoted the good news that with a safe and secure environment reconstruction projects are being completed.

Leaders of Hamrin conducted a meeting May 20 to discuss the upcoming local election in which a mayor and city council will be chosen. Representatives from Hamrin and Company B, 1-10 Field Artillery participated in the meeting as the leaders agreed to hold the election on June 16 and to organize the event on the same lines as January’s national election. Each sheik agreed to return to his tribe and recruit quality individuals to run for office.

The mayor and leaders of the Muqdadiyah area celebrated the renovations to the Joint Coordination Center with a ribbon cutting ceremony May 24. The renovations improve the capability of the JCC to effectively conduct city business.



116th Brigade Combat Team (Warrior). The 116th Brigade Combat Team's mission in North-Central Iraq continues to help Iraqi leadership establish and improve security, develop the economy, solidify governance and improve communication.

The period from May 21 to June 3 witnessed progress in every aspect of the brigade's mission. On May 31, the 116th BCT commander at Forward Operating Base Dibis transferred the Coalition Forces base to Iraqi army control. The very next day the Iraqi army, police and border enforcement officers assumed responsibility for the security mission for As Sulaymaniyah Province during the formal activation of the 3rd Iraqi Army Brigade on June 1.

The 116th BCT continues to train Iraqi army, police and border enforcement forces in both traditional and practical ways to reach the goal of transitioning all security operations back to Iraqi forces. In the past two weeks, the 2nd and 3rd Iraqi Army Brigades received dozens of new vehicles and hundreds of uniforms and weapons. More than 100 soldiers began Initial Entry Training at the 4th Iraqi Army Division Training Center in Tikrit on May 29. On May 30, the Iraqi army's 2nd Brigade for the 4th Division assumed responsibility for oil pipeline infrastructure and the Iraqi Oil Security Battalions. The 1st Battalion, 148th Field Artillery continued training Iraqi army units on first aid, and other combat skills in the past two weeks.

The Kirkuk chief of police, the director of the Provincial Joint Coordination Center (PJCC), attended an Elections Security Conference in Tikrit on May 24 and outlined strategies for upcoming elections process.

The Kirkuk PJCC and Sulaymaniyah PJCC received \$30,000 each on May 27 for their operations budgets. They have conducted meetings where the budget process was addressed and planning for expenditures was outlined and initiated.

Kirkuk Provincial Police Force purchased 42 new police vehicles with funds from Iraq's Ministry of Interior on June 1. The purchase of the new vehicles increases vehicular police patrols throughout Kirkuk Province.

The Kirkuk Police automation officer conducted computer training courses for senior law enforcement leaders June 2. Use of spreadsheets and the budgetary process were



discussed. Domies Police conducted weapons training and the Aruba Police received training on first aid.

Iraqi Security Forces continue to apply pressure on insurgents across the 116th BCT's area of operations. Iraqi army soldiers discovered unexploded ordnance (UXO). 1st Battalion, 163rd Infantry conducted successful combined operations with ISF. Officers with the Hawijah Police Department discovered an IED, and the Qoria Police investigated an IED attack. The ISF also responded to a Tuz Road IED strike.

Economic progress in the 116th BCT's area of operations continues to expand. Large-scale projects, like the Kirkuk Regional Landfill, are moving through planned stages of development. The Azadi Hospital negotiated for planned improvements. Mosque reconstruction is near complete and a new girls' secondary school is complete in Taza. Road repairs in the area make traveling to a local Mosque easier. Kirkuk's director general of water continues to report above-average water flow from Lake Dokan to the farms of the region the past two weeks.

The 116th BCT's leadership continues working with local government officials to establish their new democracy. Task force Soldiers continue to meet with Iraqi leadership in their areas to talk about local concerns. A special Hawijah working group met to address several issues affecting that community and surrounding area.

278th Regimental Combat Team (The Volunteers). The 278th Regimental Combat Team (RCT) from the Tennessee Army National Guard continues to support improvements to the local Iraqi infrastructure to and encourage support for the local Iraqi government.

Soldiers from 3rd Squadron, 278th RCT helped fight a village fire on May 17. The Khanaqin Fire Department responded to a three-alarm fire in Khanaqin that rapidly spread toward the village marketplace, endangering shops and a nearby residential area. The fire department requested assistance from the fire departments of two nearby cities, Jalula and As Sadiyah. The Joint Coordination Center (JCC), an emergency call center for interagency response, assisted in coordinating this effort. The fire took three hours to extinguish. Soldiers from 3-278th RCT assisted in the effort



by escorting the firefighters to Khanaquin, providing security while the firemen did their jobs and by distributing fresh water to the fatigued fire fighters.

Soldiers from the 386th Engineer Battalion conducted an assessment of an asphalt plant near Khanaquin on May 25 to determine if the facility can provide sufficient materials to repair roads in the area. The information provided in this visit was shared with the local city council and Coalition Forces to help develop plans for road repair.

The Mayor of Balad Ruz hosted the first monthly Regional Security Working Group meeting in that city on May 26. The meeting was organized and set up by Soldiers from 1st Squadron, 278th RCT, and will be run by Iraqi civic and security leaders from the Balad Ruz district. They discussed security and infrastructure problems and how the Iraqi Security forces and Coalition Forces can best aid them.

Division Artillery (Thunder). 42nd Division Artillery (Divarty) Soldiers continue with their mission of force protection. Radar crews across North Central Iraq continue to assist combat patrols pinpointing the launch sties of insurgent indirect fire attacks while counterfire artillery units continue their efforts to destroy the terrorists before the next round can be fired.

Division Engineers (Detonator). Task Force Trailblazer of the 467th Engineer Battalion continues the hunt for IEDs along the highways of Iraq in order to maintain mobility throughout Task Force Liberty's area of operation and ensure the safety of the Iraqi motorists. Soldiers from the 793rd Engineer Detachment (Utility) and Company C, 983rd Engineer Battalion continue to improve the force protection and quality of life for Task Force Liberty Soldiers, including plumbing and electrical upgrades.

These same engineer Soldiers also provide valuable assistance in the closure and relocation of several forward operating bases in the area of operations. The work allows Coalition Forces to live as comfortably and as safely as practical in this foreign environment. Their timely efforts to restore facilities in Tikrit and Samarra were instrumental in maintaining secure operations in those sectors.

Engineer Brigade Soldiers continue to work with the Iraqi Ministries of Power, Buildings, Health & Education, Security & Justice, and Oil to ensure the success of



reconstruction and rehabilitation of the critical infrastructure facilities in the cities of Bayji, Kirkuk and As Sulaymaniyah. Successful execution of this portion of the engineer mission not only improves the infrastructure for the Iraqi people, but also is paramount to the division's redeployment from the country.

42nd Brigade Engineers continue to operate across North Central Iraq in support of our Soldiers and the Iraqi people, to ensure the success of the 42nd Infantry Division.

Division Support Command (Muleskinner). Division Support Command (DISCOM) continues to support the logistical needs of Task Force Liberty and the growing Iraqi Security Forces. The DISCOM material management center ensures the brigades are supported in all classes of supply.

The DISCOM transition team is developing and preparing to move in June to FOB Caldwell and the Iraqi army storage warehouse in Diyala. The team will be involved in developing a brigade support element and the training required for logistics, property accountability, and maintenance. There is an overwhelming need for that training in the Iraqi army, especially in property accountability for all the new equipment arriving.

The DISCOM operations officer is already involved in the planning and future execution of the 42nd Division's redeployment needs. This includes early retrograde of non-essential equipment followed by the redeployment at the end of this year of the 42nd Infantry Division in its entirety. Rehearsals have been conducted and taskings to units developed by DISCOM are being prepared for the large-scale move. The operations officer and his team conducted a reconnaissance of Arifjan, Kuwait, the sea port for redeployment, in order to begin coordination that will ensure mission success.

The movement control officer, working alongside the division transportation officer and the Movement Section from Corps, continues the demanding work to schedule and track all Coalition Forces movements throughout North Central Iraq. The office handled more than 866 Transportation Movement Request (TMR) and close to 600 Aviation Movement Requests (AMR) to date. The movement officer coordinates with the Division Transportation Officer and corps to schedule and move combat logistics patrols throughout North Central Iraq.



The 50th Main Support Battalion (MSB) continues to be the backbone of support and transportation for the 42nd DISCOM. The MSB supported the division over this reporting period by hauling T-walls with their heavy transporters into Tikrit for continued improvements for force protection for FOB Danger.

FOB closure has been a divisional priority as Iraqi forces assume greater responsibility for the counterinsurgency mission. As part of the closure or transfer of Coalition Forces bases, the 50th MSB moved cranes and Containerized Housing Units (CHUs) to enduring FOBs that remain open for troop support. DISCOM Soldiers also moved additional Iraq army equipment including Gaz cargo trucks, Durango SUVs, weapons, individual equipment and ammunition.

The 42nd DISCOM continues to adapt to the changing missions and needs of the division, brigades and Iraqi Security Forces. DISCOM Soldiers and leaders continue to develop new tactics, techniques and procedures to accomplish their mission.

Conclusion

Task Force Liberty and our Iraqi Security Force partners continue to help provide a safe and secure Iraq. The beginning of June has marked a significant step forward in the future of Iraq as Iraqi police, army and border enforcement officers in As Sulayminayah assume provincial control in one of Iraq's 18 provinces. Additionally, Task Force Liberty began the process of reducing our forces presence across North Central Iraq with the closure of two operating bases and transferring a third to the Iraqi army.

We continue to work with the Iraqi Security Forces to neutralize the insurgency. The training and support for Iraqi forces will lead to future base transfers and closures as more opportunities for provincial control in North Central Iraq develop. We believe in the future of Iraq. To our families, friends, employers and the American people, Task Force Liberty thanks you for your steadfast support and encouragement.

Never Forget!

For more information on the 42nd Infantry Division and Task Force Liberty:

www.42id.army.mil
